THE

WEEKLY ENTERTAINER.

For MONDAY, November 24, 1800.

Particulars of the extraordinary Flood experienced in the Pariſh of St. Thomas, Exeter, on the 8th and 9th of November, 1800, and of the very narrow Eſcape of Mr. and Mrs. Holland and their Family from being drowned there on the laſt of thoſe Days.

THE heavy ſtorms of rain and wind which took place on Saturday and Sunday the 8th and 9th of November, 1800, occaſioned the waters of the River Exe to riſe in a manner never before remembered by the oldeſt inhabitant of the neighbourhood, inſomuch that the whole pariſh of Saint Thomas the Apoſtle, the Exe Iſland, and all the banks of the river, with the lands adjoining, to a great extent, were completely inundated. It is totally impoſſible to pourtray the horrors which this ſcene exhibited to every ſpectator; whilſt the loſſes which have been experienced by each individual, who had property in the neighbourhood, are incalculable. The inundation became violent on Sunday about noon, at which time the water began to flow over the ſtreets of Saint Thomas, and continued to increaſe with great rapidity until about five o'clock in the afternoon, when it had ariſen in every ſtreet of that pariſh, and in the Exe Iſland, to the height of about ſix feet.

At this period the appearance was dreadful, all the inhabitants were obliged to betake themſelves to their upper rooms, whilſt ſome, whoſe houſes were built with mud (or cobb) walls, were under the moſt ſerious alarm that they ſhould be buried in the ruins. The current of the river was then

aſtoniſhinly ſtrong, hurrying on its boſom large pieces of wood, hay-ricks, and other matters which had been ſwept by its force from the neighbouring grounds, inſomuch that ſerious apprehenſions were entertained for the ſafety even of the New Exe Bridge.

At this time all the roads entering the city on the weſt, were ſo completely under water, as to prevent any paſſing even on horſeback, when a chariot appeared from the New Bridge, oppoſite Ford and Pleaſe's nurſery ground, entangled in two carts which had been left the night before by the ſide of the road, in which were two men and one maid ſervant of Mr. Holland's, returning from Oakhampton to London. Immediately on their ſituation being diſcovered, Meſſrs. Gould, Hall, Sampſon, jun. and another, with four or five ſoldiers of the 4th regiment of foot, quartered in St. Thomas's, plunged into the water with ropes, &c. to aſſiſt them. One of the men ſervants, in endeavouring to leap from the box of the coach to the cauſeway, was carried by the current into the nurſery, where he laid hold of a tree, and remained upwards of an hour, when —— Anger, jun. ſwam to his relief, and brought him ſafe on ſhore on his ſhoulders. The other man and maid ſervant and driver were, with the aſſiſtance of ropes, drawn out of the carriage, and carried to houſes adjoining. The furthermoſt horſe was drowned.

About this time one of the drivers of Mr. Holland's coach, having eſcaped through the nurſery ground by the Sheriff's Ward Wall, into St. Thomas's-ſtreet, came on the Bridge, making known the diſtreſſing ſituation of Mr. Holland and family, whom he had left in the coach at the turn of the road, about a quarter of a mile from the Bridge.—Handkerchiefs, as ſignals, were alſo ſeen from Mr. Fryer's houſe, being the neareſt, though not able to afford them any aſſiſtance.

On this information a number of perſons ran to the Quay for a boat, when Captain Thompſon, of the Wedderburne, which I was loading with bark, with his two men, hoiſted his boat on a ſlide, and, with the help of three horſes, brought it on the New Bridge, where I met him, with a number of perſons, perſuading him to attempt their reſcue by the Oakhampton road, againſt the current. Thompſon, on ſeeing me, exclaimed, "I'll go any where with you, Ford." I then, with him, his two men, and the horſes, made a circuitous route of a mile, got the boat into the water, at the extent of Ford and and Pleaſe's nurſery, and immediately pulled away for the coach, which was acroſs the turnpike road,

oppoſite

oppoſite Mr. Glyde's barn, where we found Mr. Holland, his wife, three daughters, and Mr. Holland, his nephew, ſitting in the coach, above their middle in water, where they had been upwards of an hour.

Captain Thompſon and ſelf, whilſt the two men held faſt the boat to the coach, took Mrs. Holland and one of her daughters out of the window, when the coach floated. At this moment, Meſſrs. Davy, Manley, and three others, with three ſoldiers of the 4th regiment, plunged into the water, which ran over their ſhoulders, to prevent the coach from being upſet. The remainder of the family being releaſed, and the coach prevented from waſhing away, we rowed back, and landed to the extent of the nurſery ground. I then enquired of Mr. Holland if there was any property, &c. left in the coach.—He anſwering, there was, I requeſted Captain Thompſon to go back and ſecure it, which he did, by keeping watch all night, ſo that not an article was miſſing.

The family on getting ſafe landed received every aſſiſtance in the power of the officers of the 4th regiment, who conducted them to the Dunsford turnpike gate, where I had two horſes in waiting to carry them through the water in St. Thomas's-ſtreet, which they had to paſs; one other horſe, Mr. Kerſwell was ſo good in a few minutes to get ready. Mrs. Holland was aſſiſted up behind myſelf, her daughter behind my ſervant, and another behind Mr. Bamfield's ſervant; on getting near the water we met a dragoon, with diſpatches, who informed us, he was obliged to ſwim his horſe, which alarmed Mrs. Holland. My thorough knowledge of the ſhallow parts, determined me to proceed, and with the utmoſt difficulty we got to the New Bridge, where I met Mr. Philips in waiting with a chaiſe, which I placed Mrs. Holland in. The daughters would not alight, but were carried to the London Inn. Another chaiſe of Mr. Philips's, attempted to fetch the remainder of the family, went a ſmall part of the way, and returned, ſaying the water was too deep, and the current too violent. Several men on horſeback alſo attempted it, and were afraid.

After this myſelf, my ſervant, and Mr. Bamfield's ſervant, went again to the remainder of them, (diſtance at leaſt a quarter of a mile), and fetched them in ſafety.

The next morning Mr. Holland ſent by Mr. G. Davidſon to requeſt me to meet him at the London Inn, which I did with Mr. Davidſon, who had been particularly active, and ſaved the property in the chariot. Mr. Holland enquired

how many perſons had been of real ſervice, the expence of the boat, &c. &c. when he gave me a 25l. Bank of England bill to diſtribute amongſt them.

At four o'clock in the afternoon the Rev. Mr. Coppleſtone, vicar, Mr. J. Bidwill, and Mr. Hore, churchwardens, met me at the Seven Stars, when we diſtributed the ſame, and ſent an account of particulars, with their atteſtations, to Mr. Holland, who, with his nephew, came the next morning to return his ſincere thanks, and view the perilous ſituation they were in, as well as the ſtate of the pariſh.

WILLIAM FORD.

Exeter, November 14, 1800.

FRENCH STAGE COACH AND INNS.

[From Kotzebue's Flight to Paris.]

DECEMBER 14.

ON this morning alſo we ſet off at ſix. We choſe, for our conveyance, the diligence to Paris, which was to reach that capital on the evening of the 16th.

Never in my life did I take a more unpleaſant journey. I will freely own, indeed, that the diſtempered ſtate of my mind throws a gloom over every thing around me, and that I am now captious and peeviſh under inconveniences at which, in my happier days, I ſhould only have laughed; but here many things are really inſufferable.

In the firſt place, the boaſted commodiouſneſs of the carriage itſelf, is altogether empty vapour, or at leaſt muſt be received with very great allowance. If it carried no more than four, or perhaps ſix, there would not be any great reaſon to complain; but, unfortunately, its full complement is eight, and woe to him who happens to be one of the eight! —Woe, woe indeed, if they be all thin; but inevitable death ſhould they be fat!

Three ſit forwards, three backwards, and one againſt each door. It ſeems not at all taken into the account, that men have arms and legs. A maimed ſoldier, deprived of theſe conveniences, might ſit with tolerable eaſe. How then to ſtow all the legs, occaſions no ſmall perplexity; for, they who happen to be among the laſt that get in, will ſcarcely find a place not preoccupied by another pair. A toe, that may unfortunately be tormented with a corn, has a very good chance of becoming a footſtool to a neighbour, till its owner,

owner, no longer able to endure the torture, will be extremely glad to draw up his leg like that of a bird of paradiſe. In this ſituation, however, it is impoſſible to remain long without the contracted limb becoming ſo inſupportably ſtiff, that it cannot be moved again but with extreme difficulty; and when at laſt the happy moment arrives that brings a temporary releaſe from this confinement, he is perhaps ſcarcely able to get out of the carriage.

Another convenience of this ſqueezed mode of travelling is the almoſt inſurmountable labour of getting a handkerchief out of the pocket. This is, indeed, ſuch a Herculean taſk, that big drops of blood ſtand on the forehead ere it can be accompliſhed. A pickpocket could never be ſo effectually ſecured againſt carrying on his trade as in this diligence. In the front, or backwards, the preſs is the moſt intolerable, conſequently they who ſit againſt the doors are the leaſt incommoded with reſpect to elbow room; though otherwiſe they are in far the worſt ſituation, and, beſides, run the hazard of having their necks broken, ſuppoſing the doors not to be properly faſtened.

The vapour of ſo much breath pent up together is another agreeable circumſtance. There are indeed ſix windows to the carriage, but, unleſs in very warm weather, it is ſcarcely poſſible to endure more than one or two open, which is totally inſufficient to remedy the evil. The impoſſibility of the paſſengers within opening the doors, is an additional grievance; they are, as it were, ſhut up in a priſon, or cage, from which they can be releaſed only by the gaoler.

Thus is a coach full of men carried about from town to town, as the higglers carry a baſket of fowls; and as a conſummation of their miſery, when they arrive at the bureau, ſeven or eight minutes are perhaps ſuffered to elapſe before the driver will be pleaſed to open the door of this black hole, during which they endure all ihe torture of that impatience, unavoidably attached to ſuch a teazing ſpecies of procraſtination. Of all things under the ſun, confinement is to me the moſt vexatious, and a confinement like what I have deſcribed, the moſt vexatious of all.

Many people conſider a cold as healthy. He then, who has not had the ſatisfaction of enjoying ſuch a token of health for ſome time, need only take a journey in this diligence, and he may be tolerably ſecure of obtaining the deſired gratification. As every paſſenger pays for his place, and as it has been long an univerſally eſtabliſhed maxim, that one man's money is as good as another's, ſo each indi-

vidual

vidual thinks he has equal right with his neighbour to regulate the opening of the windows, at leaſt of that by which he ſits. Thus, inſtead of entering into a general compact for the advantage of the whole company, each, with the true ſelfiſhneſs of human nature, conſiders merely his own private intereſt, and perhaps make ſuch draughts of wind, that it is only wonderful how any body eſcapes cold.

The fare at the inns is, beſides, very bad, and very dear. For terribly inſipid bouillie with ſoaked bread, diſagreeable to the eye, and ſtill more diſagreeable to the palate, ſodden, taſteleſs beef, and vegetables dreſſed with oil, we commonly paid half a dollar. Gladly would I have reſigned, for a tolerable piece of beef, or a roaſt leg of mutton, the deſert that even in theſe miſerable inns always ſucceeds the dinner. This conſiſts of wretched dry biſcuits, cheſnuts, and fruit. Never in my life did I taſte any thing more nauſeous than a ſort of biſcuit they called *eſchaude:* it has the flavour of foul air.

To dirty the table-cloth is impoſſible, ſince, according to appearance, it has made a viſit up the chimney before it be ſpread. This is accompanied with forks no leſs filthy, and very uninviting for taking up the food; and as to a knife, no ſuch thing is to be had. Every traveller is expected, like a German peaſant or butcher, to carry one in his pocket, and to uſe it at his meals, firſt whetting it on his breeches. The wine is the beſt thing brought to table, though only a light country wine, but this is drank out of beer glaſſes, to which I have a mortal averſion.

Inconvenient as this journey muſt neceſſarily be at all times, it is rendered ten times worſe by being taken in winter. To provide a room, with a fire, againſt the arrival of the diligence, is what nobody thinks of, and the only reſource againſt periſhing with cold, is to adjourn to the kitchen. But this is a very partial remedy; he alone who fortunately is among the firſt that enter, and underſtands how to manage, has any chance of obtaining a tolerable birth, and even he can only chooſe whether to warm himſelf in the front or in the rear, for to do both is impoſſible. This is another advantage for the lovers of colds. Nor is this all: they have yet a third chance. Theſe places are never floored, only paved with brick, from which a chill peſtilential moiſture is continually riſing; to this may be added, all the water thrown about, people ſpitting, and dogs doing what dogs will ever do, which altogether form an aſſemblage of damps that

may fairly be conſidered as reducing the matter to a certainty.

Two hours is the time allowed for dining, and the diligence ought alſo to ſtop for the night. But ſince in winter the roads are frequently bad, and it muſt be at Paris at the time appointed, it often travels all night, or at leaſt reſts for ſo ſhort a time, that it is ſcarcely worth while to attempt going to bed, though it is a ſufficient delay to weary and fatigue the paſſengers, unleſs they happen to be bleſſed with that propenſity ſo common to travellers, of being able to eat and drink at any time, even in the middle of the night.

And ſhould it happen that five or ſix hours are allowed for reſt, a man muſt be ſomewhat practiſed in witchcraft to be able to ſleep. The beſt accommodations to be procured, are a periſhingly cold room, where the wind blows in at every corner, furniſhed with a bedſtead ready to break down, to which are attached old tattered hangings, and a feather-bed ſhaken up high at the feet, ſomewhat lower in the middle, and loweſt of all at the head. If, in ſpite of all theſe preventatives, a doze ſhould begin to ſteal over the traveller's wearied eye-lids, he may rely upon being quickly awakened again, either by the noiſes of the inn, or the howling of the wind in the chimney.

But, moſt terrible of all, is the ſituation of the poor unfortunate valetudinarian, who, from the ſtate of his health, cannot, without inconvenience, experience a privation of his cuſtomary habit of ſacrificing every morning to a certain ſubterranean divinity held in great reſpect among the Romans—or, to put the caſe in another point of view, who wiſhes not to forego the performance of what, if neglected, would, according to Montaigne, transform even a Seneca into a fool. The ſhaking of the vehicle has perhaps rendered it doubtful whether this can be accompliſhed or not, and ſhould he wiſh to counteract theſe bad effects by a diſh of coffee and a morning pipe, either there is no time for taking them, or if he be diſpoſed to rob himſelf of an hour of reſt, and riſe early, that ſufficient time for the purpoſe may be ſecured, where is the coffee to be had? In the inn, it is never furniſhed, and at the coffee-houſe the people are never up ſo early. But he may give the waiter at the coffee-houſe a trifle to riſe on purpoſe. So he may, and the waiter will make very liberal promiſes over night, which before morning will be entirely forgotten.

Narrative

Narrative of the Infancy and Youth of Robert Burns, the Scotch Poet. Written by Himſelf.

[From Dr. Currie's new Edition of the Works of Burns.]

ROBERT BURNS was, as is well known, the ſon of a farmer in Ayrſhire, and afterwards himſelf a farmer there; but having been unſucceſsful, he was about to emigrate to Jamaica. He had previouſly however attracted ſome notice by his poetical talents in the vicinity where he lived, and having publiſhed a ſmall volume of his poems at Kilmarnock, this drew upon him more general attention. In conſequence of the encouragement he received, he repaired to Edinburgh, and there publiſhed by ſubſcription an improved and enlarged edition of his poems, which met with extraordinary ſucceſs. By the profits ariſing from the ſale of this edition, he was enabled to enter on a farm in Dumfrieſshire; and having married a perſon to whom he had been long attached, he retired, to devote the remainder of his life to agriculture. He was again, however, unſucceſsful, and abandoning his farm, he removed to the town of Dumfries, where he filled an inferior office in the exciſe, and where he terminated his life in July, 1796, in his 38th year.

The ſtrength and originality of his genius procured him the notice of many perſons diſtinguiſhed in the republic of letters, and among others, that of Dr. Moore, well known for his Views of Society and Manners on the Continent of Europe, for his Zeluco, and various other works. To this gentleman our poet addreſſed the following letter, after his firſt viſit to Edinburgh, being a hiſtory of his life up to the period of his writing. In a compoſition never intended to ſee the light, elegance or perfect correctneſs of compoſition will not be expected. Theſe, however, will be compenſated by the opportunity of ſeeing our poet, as he gives the incidents of his life, unfold the peculiarities of his character, with all the careleſs vigour and open ſincerity of his mind.

" SIR, *Mauchline, Auguſt* 2, 1787.

" For ſome months paſt I have been rambling over the country, but am now confined with ſome lingering complaints, originating, as I take it, in the ſtomach. To divert my ſpirits a little in this miſerable fog of *ennui*, I have taken a whim to give you a hiſtory of myſelf. My name has made ſome little noiſe in this country; you have done

me the honour to intereſt yourſelf very warmly in my behalf; and I think a faithful account of what character of a man I am, and how I came by that character, may perhaps amuſe you in an idle moment. I will give you an honeſt narrative, though I know it will be often at my own expence; for I aſſure you, Sir, I have, like Solomon, whoſe character, except in the trifling affair of *wiſdom*, I ſometimes think I reſemble; I have, I ſay, like him turned my eyes to behold madneſs and folly; and like him too frequently ſhaken hands with their intoxicating friendſhip. * * * * After you have peruſed theſe pages, ſhould you think them trifling and impertinent, I only beg leave to tell you, that the poor author wrote them under ſome twitching qualms of conſcience, ariſing from a ſuſpicion that he was doing what he ought not to do; a predicament he has more than once been in before.

" I have not the moſt diſtant pretenſions to aſſume that character which the pye-coated guardians of eſcutcheons call, a gentleman. When at Edinburgh laſt winter, I got acquainted in the herald's office, and looking through the granary of honours, I there found almoſt every name of the kingdom; but for me,

" My ancient but ignoble blood
" Has crept through ſcoundrels ever ſince the flood."

" Gules, purpure, argent, &c. quite diſowned me.

" My father was of the north of Scotland, the ſon of a farmer, and was thrown by early misfortunes on the world at large; where after many years wanderings and ſojournings, he picked up a pretty large quantity of obſervation and experience, to which I am indebted for moſt of my little pretenſions to wiſdom.—I have met with few who underſtood men, their manners, and their ways, equal to him; but ſtubborn ungainly integrity, and headlong ungovernable iraſcibility, are diſqualifying circumſtances; conſequently I was born a very poor man's ſon,

" For the firſt ſix or ſeven years of my life, my father was gardener to a worthy gentleman of ſmall eſtate in the neighbourhood of Ayr. Had he continued in that ſtation, I muſt have marched off to be one of the little underlings about a farm-houſe; but it was his deareſt wiſh and prayer to have it in his power to keep his children under his own eye, till they could diſcern between good and evil: ſo with the aſſiſtance of his generous maſter, my father ventured on a

ſmall farm on his eſtate. At thoſe years I was by no means a favourite with any body. I was a good deal noted for a retentive memory, a ſtubborn ſturdy ſomething in my diſpoſition, and an enthuſiaſtic ideot piety—I ſay *ideot* piety, becauſe I was then but a child. Though it coſt the ſchoolmaſter ſome thraſhings, I made an excellent Engliſh ſcholar; and by the time I was ten or eleven years of age, I was a critic in ſubſtantives, verbs, and particles. In my infant and boyiſh days too, I owed much to an old woman who reſided in the family, remarkable for her ignorance, credulity, and ſuperſtition. She had, I ſuppoſe, the largeſt collection in the country of tales and ſongs concerning devils, ghoſts, fairies, brownies, witches, warlocks, ſpunkies, kelpies, elf-candles, dead-lights, wraiths, apparitions, cantraips, giants, inchanted towers, dragons, and other trumpery. This cultivated the latent ſeeds of poetry; but had ſo ſtrong an effect on my imagination, that to this hour, in my nocturnal rambles, I ſometimes keep a ſharp look out in ſuſpicious places; and though nobody can be more ſceptical than I am in ſuch matters, yet it often takes an effort of philoſophy to ſhake off theſe idle terrors. The earlieſt compoſition that I recollect taking pleaſure in was, The Viſion of Mirza, and a hymn of Addiſon's beginning, "How are thy ſervants bleſt, O Lord!" I particularly remember one half-ſtanza which was muſic to my boyiſh ear—

"For though on dreadful whirls we hung
"High on the broken wave."—

I met with theſe pieces in Maſon's Engliſh Collection, one of my ſchool-books. The two firſt books I ever read in private, and which gave me more pleaſure than any two books I ever read ſince, were, the life of Hannibal and the hiſtory of Sir William Wallace. Hannibal gave my young ideas ſuch a turn, that I uſed to ſtrut in raptures up and down after the recruiting drum and bag-pipe, and wiſhed myſelf tall enough to be a ſoldier; while the ſtory of Wallace poured a Scottiſh prejudice into my veins, which will boil along there, till the flood-gates of life ſhut in eternal reſt.

"Polemical divinity about this time was putting the country half-mad, and I, ambitious of ſhining in converſation parties on Sundays between ſermons, at funerals, &c. uſed, a few years afterwards, to puzzle Calviniſm with ſo much heat and indiſcretion, that it raiſed a hue and cry of hereſy againſt me, which has not ceaſed to this hour.

"My

" My vicinity to Ayr was of ſome advantage to me. My ſocial diſpoſition, when not checked by ſome modification of ſpited pride, was, like our catechiſm definition of infinitude, without bounds or limits. I formed ſeveral connections with other *younkers* who poſſeſſed ſuperior advantages; the *youngling* actors who were buſy in the rehearſal of parts in which they were ſhortly to appear on the ſtage of life, where, alas, I was deſtined to drudge behind the ſcenes. It is not commonly at this green age, that our young gentry have a juſt ſenſe of the immenſe diſtance between them and their ragged play-fellows. It takes a few daſhes into the world, to give the young great man that proper, decent, unnoticing diſregard for the poor, inſignificant, ſtupid, devils, the mechanics and peaſantry around him, which were perhaps born in the ſame village. My young ſuperiors never inſulted the *clouterly* appearance of my plough-boy carcaſe, the two extremities of which were often expoſed to all the inclemencies of all the ſeaſons. They would give me ſtray volumes of books; among them, even then, I could pick up ſome obſervations, and one, whoſe heart I am ſure not even the Munny Begum ſcenes have tainted, helped me to a little French. Parting with theſe my young friends and benefactors, as they occaſionally went off for the Eaſt or Weſt Indies, was often to me a very ſore affliction, but I was ſoon called to more ſerious evils. My father's generous maſter died; the farm proved a ruinous bargain; and, to clench the misfortune, we fell into the hands of a factor, who ſat for the picture I have drawn of one in my *Tale of the Twa Dogs*. My father was advanced in life when he married; I was the eldeſt of ſeven children, and he, worn out by early hardſhips, was unfit for labour. My father's ſpirit was ſoon irritated, but not eaſily broken. There was a freedom in his leaſe of two years more, and to weather theſe two years we retrenched our expences. We lived very poorly; I was a dextrous ploughman for my age, and the next-eldeſt to me was a brother (Gilbert), who could drive the plough very well, and help me to thraſh the corn. A novel writer might perhaps have viewed theſe ſcenes with ſome ſatisfaction, but ſo did not I; my indignation yet boils at the recollection of the ſcoundrel factor's inſolent threatening letters, which uſed to ſet us all in tears.

" This kind of life, the cheerleſs gloom of a hermit, with the unceaſing moil of a galley ſlave, brought me to my ſixteenth year; a little before which period I firſt committed the ſin of rhyme. You know our country cuſtom o

coupling a man and woman together as partners in the labours of harveſt. In my fifteenth autumn, my partner was a bewitching creature, a year younger than myſelf. My ſcarcity of Engliſh denies me the power of doing her juſtice in that language, but you know the Scottiſh idiom; ſhe was a *bonnie, ſweet, ſonſie laſs*. In ſhort, ſhe altogether, unwittingly to herſelf, initiated me in that delicious paſſion, which, in ſpite of acid diſappointment, gin-horſe prudence, and book-worm philoſophy, I hold to be the firſt of human joys, our deareſt bleſſing here below! How ſhe caught the contagion I cannot tell; you medical people talk much of infection from breathing the ſame air, the touch, &c. but I never expreſsly ſaid I loved her. Indeed I did not know myſelf why I liked ſo much to loiter behind with her, when returning in the evening from our labour; why the tones of her voice made my heart-ſtrings thrill like an Æolian harp; and particularly why my pulſe beat ſuch a furious ratan when I looked and fingered over her little hand to pick out the cruel nettle-ſtings and thiſtles.

"Among her other love-inſpiring qualities, ſhe ſung ſweetly; and it was her favourite reel to which I attempted giving an embodied vehicle in rhyme. I was not ſo preſumptuous as to imagine, that I could make verſes like printed ones, compoſed by men who had Greek and Latin; but my girl ſung a ſong which was ſaid to be compoſed by a ſmall country laird's ſon, on one of his father's maids, with whom he was in love; and I ſaw no reaſon why I might not rhyme as well as he; for, excepting that he could ſmear ſheep, and caſt peats, his father living in the moor lands, he had no more ſcholar-craft than myſelf.

"Thus with me began love and poetry; which at times have been my only, and, till within the laſt twelve months, have been my higheſt enjoyment.

(To be continued.)

SEVERE METHOD *of* PUNISHING FORGERY.

FORGERY is one of thoſe crimes, the frequency of which ſeems to increaſe with the certainty of puniſhment. Excluded in almoſt every inſtance from the royal clemency, it is daily becoming more common, and the alteration of the puniſhment to death has had no terrifying influence. The puniſhment of this crime formerly was perhaps thought too ſanguinary by ſome, and too merciful by others,

others, ſo difficult it is to apportion puniſhments to crimes, and ſo ſhort-ſighted are legiſlators when they conſider death as a preventive as well as a curb.

In a journal for the year 1731, we find the following detail of the then mode of puniſhment, which to many of our readers is probably unknown.

June 9.—" This day, about noon, Japhet Crook, alias Sir Peter Stranger, was brought to the pillory at Charing Croſs, according to his ſentence for forgery. He ſtood an hour thereon; after which a chair was ſet on the pillory, and he being put therein, the hangman with a ſort of pruning-knife cut off both his ears, and immediately a ſurgeon clapt a ſtyptic thereon. Then the executioner, with a pair of ſciſſars, cut his left noſtril twice before it was quite through, and afterwards cut through his right noſtril at once. He bore all this with great patience; but when, in purſuance of his ſentence, his right noſtril was ſeared with a hot iron, he was in ſuch violent pain, that his left noſtril was let alone, and he went from the pillory bleeding. He was conveyed thence to the King's Bench priſon, to remain there for life. He died in confinement about three years after."

An EXTRAORDINARY STORY.

SOME years ago, as a gentleman was travelling from Straſburg, in company with a merchant of that city, attended by one ſervant and a favourite dog, the merchant became ſuddenly indiſpoſed, and giving his horſe to the care of his ſervant, retired among ſome trees, which grew on one ſide of the road; upon his endeavouring to remount, the dog ſeized his coat, and held him with all its ſtrength, growling and barking in a very uncommon manner.

Unable to form any idea of the cauſe, the parties were all a little apprehenſive of the animal's being mad. The maſter laſhed him ſeverely, and at length getting from his hold, attempted to purſue his route; but the dog not only continued his barkings, but bit at the horſe's noſe and feet, inſomuch that the merchant, who was a man of ſtrong paſſions, drew a piſtol and wounded him mortally. Upon receiving the wound the dog fell, but in a few moments recovered himſelf, and caſting a moſt piteous look at his enraged maſter, turned back, and crawled towards the city.

The travellers purſued their journey for about three miles, when they ſtopped at an inn for refreſhment. In attempting

to

to diſcharge the bill, the merchant now found that he had forgot, among the trees, a leather belt, made in the manner of a ſhot belt, in which, according to the cuſtom of travellers in Germany, he carried his money; recollecting, however, the privacy of the place, and that no other perſons had paſſed the road, he was not in the leaſt uneaſy at the event, and propoſed riding back with his ſervant to recover his property. His fellow-traveller, however, not only offered, but inſiſted on returning with him.

Upon their arrival at the fatal ſpot, there lay the belt, and on it the ſagacious victim of fidelity breathing its laſt breath in convulſions. A ſpectacle ſo extremely melancholy, ſenſibly affected the whole party; but how was the diſtreſs increaſed, when the merchant, ſeized by a ſudden and violent phrenzy, flew to his ſecond piſtol, and endeavoured to lodge the contents in his own body, and his companion and ſervant were obliged to uſe the utmoſt force to prevent him from ſelf-deſtruction. Having, however, ſecured him ſo as to prevent the immediate fatal effects of inſanity, they returned to Straſburg; where, notwithſtanding every medical effort, the unfortunate merchant in a few days died raving mad!

Characters of Aleſſandra and Caſſandra Fidelis, two learned Women of the fifteenth Century.

AMONG the circumſtances favourable to the promotion of letters in the 15th century, another yet remains to be noticed, which it would be unpardonable to omit, and which, if it did not greatly contribute towards their progreſs, certainly tended not only to render the ſtudy of the languages more general, but to remove the idea that the acquiſition of them was attended with any extraordinary difficulty. This was the partiality ſhewn to theſe ſtudies, and the proficiency made in them by women, illuſtrious by their birth, or eminent for their perſonal accompliſhments.

Among theſe, Aleſſandra was peculiarly diſtinguiſhed. The extraordinary beauty of her perſon was ſurpaſſed by the endowments of her mind. At an early age, ſhe was a proficient not only in the Latin but the Greek tongue, which ſhe had ſtudied under Joannes Laſcar and Demetrius Chalcondyles. Such an union of excellence attracted the attention, and is ſuppoſed to have engaged the affections of Palitiano; but Aleſſandra gave her hand to the Greek Marullus, who

enjoyed at Florence the favour of Lorenzo de Medici, and in the elegance of his Latin compoſitions emulated the Italians themſelves. Hence probably aroſe thoſe diſſenſions between Marullus and Politiano, the monuments of which yet remain in their writings.

Of yet greater celebrity is the name of Caſſandra Fidelis. Deſcended from anceſtors who had changed their reſidence from Milan to Venice, and had uniformly added to the reſpectability of their rank by their uncommon learning, ſhe began at an early age to proſecute her ſtudies with great diligence, and acquired ſuch a knowledge of the learned languages, that with juſtice ſhe may be enumerated among the firſt ſcholars of the age. The letters which occaſionally paſſed between Caſſandra and Palatiano demonſtrate their mutual eſteem, if indeed ſuch expreſſion be ſufficient to characterize the feelings of Politiano, who expreſſes in language unuſually florid his high admiration of her extraordinary acquirements, and his expectation of the benefits which the cauſe of letters would derive from her labours and example. In the year 1491, the Florentine ſcholar made a viſit to Venice, where the favourable opinion which he had formed of her writings was confirmed by a perſonal interview.

"Yeſterday," ſays he, writing to his great patron, "I paid a viſit to the celebrated Caſſandra, to whom I preſented your reſpects. She is, indeed, a ſurpriſing woman, as well from her acquirements in her own language as in the Latin, and in my opinion ſhe may be called handſome. I left her, aſtoniſhed at her talents."

From a letter of this lady many years afterwards to Leo the Tenth, we learn that an epiſtolary correſpondence had ſubſiſted between her and Lorenzo de Medici; and it is with concern we perceive, that the remembrance of this intercourſe is revived in order to induce the Pontiff to beſtow on her ſome pecuniary aſſiſtance, ſhe being then a widow, with a numerous train of dependents. She lived, however, to an advanced period, and died in the year 1588, having then completed a full century. Her literary acquirements, and the reputation of her early aſſociates, threw a luſtre on her declining years; and as her memory remained unimpaired to the laſt, ſhe was reſorted to from all parts of Italy, as a living monument of thoſe happier days which were never adverted to without regret.

That this attention to ſerious ſtudies, by which theſe celebrated women diſtinguiſhed themſelves, was the characteriſtic of the ſex in general, cannot perhaps with truth be aſſerted.

aſſerted. The admiration beſtowed on thoſe who had ſignalized themſelves, affords indeed a ſtrong preſumption to the contrary. Yet the pretenſions of the ſex to literary eminence were not confined to theſe inſtances. The Italian hiſtorians have noticed many other women of high rank, who obtained by their learning no inconſiderable ſhare of applauſe. Palitiano celebrates as a tenth muſe a lady of Sienna, to whom he gives the name of Cecca; and from the numerous pieces in the learned languages profeſſedly addreſſed to women, we may reaſonably infer, that theſe ſtudies were at that time more generally diffuſed amongſt them than they have been at any ſubſequent period.

HINTS TO THE LADIES.

IT has often been remarked, that the generality of females have many admirers, and, at the ſame time, few or no lovers; and they wonder at it: but the reaſon is obvious if they thought, but thinking is become quite unfaſhionable. "Ah!" ſaid a venerable virgin, lamenting the degeneracy of the age, "courting is nothing to what it was when I was young! The flirts now a-days make the fellows ſo ſaucy, that there is hardly to be found a reſpectful lover." The obſervation was juſt. The women of the laſt age were more reſpected, becauſe they were more reſerved. For want of a proper reſerve, they are treated with an indifference which is nearly allied to contempt; they make themſelves too cheap to keep up their conſequence, without which they can never be reſpectable. To ſpeak philoſophically, a woman muſt repel before ſhe can attract. All this advice may ſound oddly to a female ear; but ſhe who laughs at it, pays no compliment to her underſtanding.

Ovid, who knew human nature tolerably well, diſcovered not a little penetration when he made Daphne fly ſo faſt from her laurelled lover, for his paſſion was increaſed by the purſuit.

To be ſtared at a few ſeaſons, and neglected, and in a few more to ſink into oblivion, is the lot of a thouſand ſhowy girls, who have only external appearances to recommend them. Without prudence and diſcretion, even the moſt ſubſtantial ornaments, though they excite admiration, will never procure eſteem.

Prudence is ſuperior to pearls, and there is no kind of compariſon between diamonds and diſcretion. Fools may be caught by the ſhell, but a man worth having will make the gem the object of his attention.

On SELF KNOWLEDGE.

PONTANUS, a man celebrated among the early reſtorers of literature, thought the ſtudy of our own hearts of ſo much importance, that he thus recommends it from his tomb; for the following is a tranſlation of his Latin epitaph:

"I am Pontanus, beloved by the powers of literature, admired by men of worth, and dignified by the monarchs of the world. Thou knoweſt now who I am, or more properly who I was: for thee, ſtranger, I who am in darkneſs, cannot know thee, but I entreat thee to—KNOW THYSELF.

Anſwer, by J. M. Jun. of Poole, to G. England's Rebus, inſerted Auguſt 18.

ITS MAGNA CHARTA Engliſhmen maintain,
And this I think your rebus will explain.

☞ We have received the like anſwer from J. King, and Alexis, of Kingſbridge; George Andrews, of Modbury; G. Coulman, of Broadhempſtone; J. Sydenham, of Poole; Serjeant Aſh, of the Exminſter Volunteers; T. Whicker, of Exeter; J. Ball, jun. and J. R. Toulmin, of Taunton; and G. Hazel, of Clovelly.

Anſwer, by J. Dunſter, of Ilminſter, to Y——'s Rebus, inſerted September 1.

THE initials, up or down, will plainly prove
The guileleſs ANNA is your matchleſs love.

† We have received the like anſwer from T. Whicker, of Exeter; Serjeant Whittle, of the Upway, and Serjeant Aſh, of the Exminſter Volunteers; T. Coumbe, of Stonehouſe; W. Bickham, jun. of Aſhburton; G. Andrews, of Modbury; J. Ball, jun. and J. R. Toulmin, of Taunton; Philom. of Teingmouth; Thomas Jarvis, of Marlborough; and J. King, of Kingſbridge.

A CHARADE, *by W. Bickham, Jun. of Aſhburton.*

THREE-FOURTHS of a fiſh, combin'd with a ſnare,
A beautiful ſinging bird they will declare.

A REBUS, *by R. Thomas, of Exeter.*

VARIOUS pretenſions reign throughout the earth,
Whence do thoſe vile impoſtures have their birth?
Many for favour boaſt an honeſt heart,
'Tis thine, kind firſt, that bleſſing to impart.

What heav'n-born pleaſure doth my next convey
Here may it reign in Britain's happy day!
'Tis this which doth the Chriſtian fire with love,
And make him contemplate the joys above.

How permanent do men my third confeſs,
And how divinely doth its precepts bleſs!
It is the ſure recourſe of drooping age,
And well adorns the monarch and the ſage.

My fourth is ſuited to moſt men's deſires,
All who love learning unto it aſpire;
Beauty lies dormant, her alluring joys,
And ſinks while we our time ſo well employ.

For ever active ſhould my fifth be found,
And well adorn'd with juſtice all around;
Motives of moderation 'twill diſplay,
And every human faculty pourtray.

Shall we for ever hear my ſixth reſound,
And have our peace in vile ſedition drown'd?
Ah no! when in the ſilent tomb we reſt,
Thoſe tumults will no more diſturb our breaſt.

'Tis thou my next that oft diſtracts the mind,
And ſure we are our end in thee to find;
Thou art the road which leads at laſt to reſt,
Where ſaints immortal are for ever bleſt.

With holy rev'rence ſhould my laſt expand,
And true devotion ſpread throughout the land
It gives to all that privilege below,
Which every ſaint divinely here may know.

Sagacious youths, range the initials true,
A well-known hero will appear in view;
Conſpicuouſly his bravery has ſhone,
And victory own'd him as her darling ſon.

POETRY.

For the WEEKLY ENTERTAINER.

VERSES *on* AUTUMN.

SUMMER has ſhed its golden rays,
And now gives place to autumn's ſmile;
Retires well bleſt with ripen'd ſheaves,
With bounteous harveſt to our iſle.

Ceres! thy gifts, profuſely ſpread,
Are ſafely lodg'd from angry ſkies,
Which furniſh human kind with bread—
Let grateful thanks to God ariſe!

For o'er the line the orb of light
Has paſs'd, and to the diſtant poles
Diſtributes equal day and night
To various regions as he rolls.

For to maturity his beams
Have brought each fruit, each herb, and flower,
That gild the gay, the ſylvan ſcenes,
The garden grove, and ſhady bower.

Pomona's choiceſt gifts appear,
And deck the trees with varied hue;
The ſtreaked apple, yellow pear,
Alternately attract the view.

The downy peach and nectarine
In ripen'd hue now greet the eye;
Rich melons and delicious pines,
And mulberries of deeper dye.

Lo! now each vernal tint decays,
The trees a faded aſpect wear,
For ſwiftly falls the wither'd leaves,
Which winter's near approach declare.

In ſpring the ſcene of youth appears,
And ſummer, manhood in its bloom;
Autumn pourtrays declining years,
And winter points us to the tomb.

P. GOVE, *Schoolmaſter.*

Exeter, September 30, 1800.

The WIDOW.

HOW ſoft the ſhade of evening ſteals along!
And the bright col'rings of autumnal ſkies

Are

Are ſlowly ſinking in her duſky veil;
The brilliant landſcape wears a milder hue;
The birds have chaunted forth their lateſt ſongs,
To hymn the cloſing period of their joys.
The breeze of autumn, now, the with'ring leaves
Of life and verdure robs; and every flow'r,
Reluctant, fades at winter's diſtant frown.
O dying ſeaſon! how thy penſive charms
Can ſoothe deſpair, and calm diſtraction's rage!
Now mis'ry's bleeding heart may taſte of peace;
The vernal landſcape is for her too bright,
And ſummer's laughing proſpects are too gay—
But thine, departing autumn, breathes a calm
Congenial to the blight of human hopes.

What youthful victim of ſevere diſtreſs
Drags her fine form along, with devious ſtep?
Now to the moon, whoſe pale beams welcome woe,
She lifts her tearful eye! the wild north blows,
But blows, unheeded, on the mourner's head;
For wilder is the tempeſt in her ſoul.
How worn that graceful frame! that cheek how pale,
Which pleaſure's ardent bluſh ſo late adorned!
Her dark robes float upon the wind that bears
Her frequent groans upon its cloſing breath.
What pen ſhall offer, e'en to pity's eye,
A faithful portrait of her wretched ſtate?
No! here the energy of language fails!
One ſimple word will amply ſpeak her grief!
She is a—widow! and, to fill her cup
Of ſorrow full, ſhe is a—mother too!
O wayward deſtiny! thy hand has ſhut
The page of earthly pleaſure from her ſight,
And from her boſom torn the roſe of love:
Its fragrant leaves lie with'ring on yon tomb,
Where ſleeps the huſband's and the father's duſt.
Sweet mourner! let that thought exhale thy tears;
'Tis but the duſt! the precious ſpirit lives
In the pure regions of eternal light,
And ſings of future intercourſe with thee,
Where the decaying roſe ſhall ſpring anew,
With added fragrance, and immortal bloom.
Nor have thine eyes been cloſed on every joy;
Oh! turn them on thoſe infant forms that cling
Around their weeping mother, beauteous babes!
Let them ſeduce thee from thy tears, and yield
The greateſt joy thy widow'd heart can feel.
Nature, with pow'rful voice, demands thy care,
Leſt thorns ſhould wound their undefended feet,
Or tempeſts beat on their unſhelter'd heads.

Then let maternal love within thy breaſt
Aſſume its tender claim, and it ſhall tune
Thy ſuff'ring ſpirit to the ſtrain of peace:
So ſhall a parent's hopes ſucceed deſpair,
And fairer proſpects open on thy view.

EPIGRAM.

SINCE your fondneſs for ſugar's ſo fatally plain,
Its a pity you have not—a taſte of the *cane*.